

Exploratory Service Projects with Youth

Adding exploratory service projects throughout facilitation of the *Roadmap* can be beneficial for youth in several different ways. First of all, youth can begin to see how they can make a difference in their community in a more direct way earlier in the curriculum. Youth can also start exploring needs they want to address or possible ideas for their own service project. Exploratory service projects can also provide additional learning opportunities for what goes into planning a project.

Page xii in the *Roadmap* (in the Introduction section) discusses possible project ideas and the value that they may add to the curriculum. Here are some other questions and ideas to help facilitators start thinking about exploratory service projects:

Scheduling Projects

- ⇒ Do you want to add one service project or several? If you add several, consider focusing later projects on needs and issues youth start identifying in Units 3, 4, and 5.
- ⇒ How much facilitation time do you have available? Depending on your time limits, you may be limited in how many projects you can add or what kind of projects you can do.
- ⇒ How much planning time do you have? Planning additional service projects will take additional time to work through the logistics. Ensure that you have adequate time set aside before starting. Planning and/or facilitating exploratory service projects can also be a way for members not directly facilitating the curriculum to youth to be involved in the youth portion of the process.
- ⇒ When will you debrief the projects? What do you want to ensure is discussed while debriefing? Consider using the DIGA model from the Facilitator's Toolkit to debrief. You may also want to intentionally add discussion questions about the different aspects of planning the project so youth can begin to see what they will need to do when planning their own project.

Logistical Issues

- ⇒ How limited are you in location? Organizing transportation for youth can be difficult. Even if you are staying within walking distance, there may be liability issues to consider if taking youth off-site.
- ⇒ What service projects can be organized on-site?
- ⇒ How will liability issues affect additional service projects? Will you need permission slips from the youth for each project?
- ⇒ How will you acquire any supplies necessary for the project?

Involving Youth Participants

- ⇒ What sort of projects will interest your youth?
- ⇒ Can you involve your participants in choosing and/or planning exploratory service projects? How?
- ⇒ Are projects inclusive for all youth? (e.g. youth with different abilities or disabilities, youth who are English Language Learners)